



Department of Homeland Security National Infrastructure Protection Center

Daily Open Source Infrastructure Report for 17 March 2003

Current Nationwide
Threat Level is



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www.whitehouse.gov/homeland

Daily Overview

- The New York Times reports a fire at a New Jersey fuel depot, where a propane truck exploded, continued to burn yesterday, preventing hundreds of people from returning to their homes and keeping authorities from fully investigating the blaze. (See item [1](#))
- CNN reports the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention is working to gather more information to share with the public concerning Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome, an atypical pneumonia with more than 150 new or suspected cases recently reported around the world. (See item [12](#))
- The Associated Press reports U.S. Customs agents seized \$3 million worth of bogus identification documents and arrested two foreign nationals in what officials described Thursday as a major coup for the new federal Homeland Security department. (See item [16](#))
- Government Computer News reports the National Institute of Standards and Technology has partnered with the National Security Agency to draw up Protection Profiles—basic security recommendations for ten hardware and software areas. (See item [27](#))

DHS/NIPC Update *Fast Jump*

Production Industries: [Energy](#); [Chemical](#); [Defense Industrial Base](#)

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Energy Sector

Current Electricity Sector Threat Alert Levels: Physical: Elevated, Cyber: Elevated

Scale: LOW, GUARDED, ELEVATED, HIGH, SEVERE [Source: ISAC for the Electricity Sector (ES-ISAC) – <http://esisac.com>]

March 16, New York Times — **North Jersey depot fire keeps hundreds from homes. A fire at a Newton, NJ, fuel depot continued to burn yesterday, preventing hundreds of people from returning to their homes and keeping authorities from fully investigating the blaze.** On Friday, hundreds of people were evacuated from their homes after a propane truck exploded at the depot, run by Able Energy Products. The depot is a major heating oil and diesel fuel storage site for the company, which provides 10,000 customers with propane gas. "The fire is still burning and we really don't know when it will go out," said Camille Furgiuele, the Newton town manager. About 10 people, including firefighters and some employees of Able Energy, suffered minor injuries, she said. **Furgiuele said authorities had evacuated nearly 1,000 homes, businesses and apartment complexes within three-quarters of a mile of the depot.** John Vrabel, the manager of the fuel company, said investigators had determined that none of the underground storage tanks at the depot had leaked. "They've isolated the problem to one of the propane vehicles," he said, "but it's still not clear what triggered the explosion." He said company investigators had been on the scene since the fire began. Vrabel said that the timing of the explosion, just after 5 p.m., and quick thinking by employees helped keep the number of injuries relatively low. **Shortly before the explosion, an employee became concerned about the condition of one of the propane trucks, and several workers began alerting emergency officials.** The fire is believed to be the first since Able Energy took over the depot in the mid-1990's, he said.

Source: <http://www.nytimes.com/2003/03/16/nyregion/16BLAS.html?ex=10488271417ae6d84a>

2. *March 14, Associated Press* — **Equipment problems shut down TVA reactors . A combination of maintenance outages and equipment failures nearly pulled the plug on the Tennessee Valley Authority's nuclear reactor program. With one reactor off line for refueling and a second powering down for major repairs beginning this weekend, TVA's five-reactor nuclear program already was moving to low ebb. Equipment problems knocked out two more reactors Monday in separate incidents. That left the nation's largest public utility with only one reactor at the Browns Ferry nuclear station in Athens, Ala., operating at full power Thursday.** Nuclear power accounts for about 20 percent of TVA's generating capacity, but officials said there will be no shortages of power. One reactor could be back in service before another begins a major outage Sunday to replace four steam generators; two other reactors shuttered by equipment failures could be back in service within days, TVA officials said. **TVA supplies electricity to 8.3 million people in Tennessee, Kentucky, Virginia, North Carolina, Georgia, Alabama and Mississippi.**

Source: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A24098-2003Mar 14.html>

3. *March 13, PR Newswire* — **Chesapeake Energy announces acquisition of gas reserves.** Chesapeake Energy Corporation today announced that it has completed its previously announced acquisition of Mid-Continent gas assets from the El Paso Corporation for \$500 million. **Based on internal reservoir engineering estimates, Chesapeake believes that it has acquired approximately 328 billion cubic feet of gas equivalent (bcfe) of proved gas reserves and approximately 70 bcfe of probable and possible gas reserves. The acquired properties are expected to contribute approximately 67 million cubic feet of gas equivalent per day to Chesapeake's continued production growth.** Headquartered in Oklahoma City, Chesapeake Energy Corporation is one of the 10 largest independent natural gas producers in the U.S.

Source: http://hsweb01.screamingmedia.com/PMA/pma_newsarticle1_national.htm?SMDOCID=comtex_2003_03_13_pr_0000-1662-ok-chesapeake-resrvsa

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Chemical Sector

Nothing to report.

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Defense Industrial Base Sector

4. *March 14, Associated Press* — **U.K. accuses protesters in base break-in.** Police on Friday were holding two anti-war protesters who allegedly damaged support vehicles after breaking into an air base used by U.S. bombers ahead of a possible war with Iraq. **The Ministry of Defense said the pair got "nowhere near aircraft" at the Royal Air Force's Fairford base in western England, but wouldn't specify which vehicles were damaged or what was done to them. Military police arrested the protesters Thursday night after they cut through a fence surrounding the base and damaged the vehicles, then handed them to regular police in the nearby town of Stroud, Gloucestershire.** Fourteen American B-52 giant bombers arrived at Fairford earlier this month as part of preparations for possible military action in the Persian Gulf region. **In Turkey, police on Friday detained two dozen Greenpeace activists who chained themselves to the wheels of a truck blocking an entrance to an eastern Turkish port where U.S. forces are unloading equipment.**

Source: http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A24298-2003Mar_14.html

5. *March 14, Federal Computer Week* — **Commanders emphasize C4ISR.** In March 13 testimony before the Senate Armed Services Committee, the leaders of the Pacific, Southern and United Nations commands, **outlined how critical the continued development of command, control, communications, computers, intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (C4ISR) systems is in the global war on terrorism and future conflicts.** "Over the past three years, improving the C4 posture in the Pacific has been a top [Pacific Command] priority and still is one of the most critical challenges we face today," said Pacom commander Navy Adm. Thomas Fargo. "The C4 infrastructure must be continually sustained and protected. We've invested heavily in command and control systems and equipment, communication devices, and computers across the command. We do this because our current and future requirements demand that we do." **Army Gen. James Hill, commander of Southern Command, agreed but said his current C4 infrastructure "lacks the flexibility to execute the assigned mission due to over-reliance on inadequate commercial communications systems, limited communications bandwidth, and fragmented operations and maintenance support."** Army Gen. Leon LaPorte, commander of the Korea-U.S. Combined Forces Command, U.S. Forces Korea and the United Nations Command, said increasing C4ISR functionality and interoperability, including an enhanced common operational picture, is one of his top priorities for force modernization. **LaPorte thanked the senators for their support thus far, but said the common operational picture "is built on an aging communications infrastructure that is increasingly expensive to maintain,"**

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Banking and Finance Sector

6. *March 14, Department of the Treasury* — **Joint Federal Reserve and Treasury report highlights U.S. efforts to confront global counterfeiting.** The Federal Reserve Board and the Treasury Department on Friday issued a joint report to Congress stating that procedures to combat international counterfeiting of U.S. currency are becoming more effective. U.S. dollars are held and widely used around the world, and the popularity and ubiquity of the dollar make it a potential target for counterfeiters. The incidence of counterfeiting has declined markedly with the introduction of the 1996-series currency. An upcoming new series currency, to be introduced later this year, will further enhance the security of U.S. banknotes. **The report, "The Use and Counterfeiting of United States Currency Abroad, Part II," mandated by Congress as part of the Anti-Terrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act of 1996, represents a comprehensive review of the international use and counterfeiting of U.S. currency. The report details how the combined efforts of the Treasury, United States Secret Service, and Federal Reserve have held the incidence of counterfeiting at relatively low nominal levels.** Report: <http://www.treasury.gov/press/releases/docs/counterfeit.pdf>
Source: <http://www.treasury.gov/press/releases/js108.htm>

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Transportation Sector

7. *March 14, Memphis Commercial Appeal* — **Armed cargo pilots get panel's nod.** Air cargo pilots could carry guns and cargo hubs would face federal security inspections under legislation approved by the Senate Commerce Committee Thursday. **The action marked the first step in the effort by air cargo pilots to extend a new federal law allowing passenger airline pilots to carry weapons if they pass a training course run by the Transportation Security Administration to include cargo pilots.** The bill's sponsor, Sen. Barbara Boxer (D-CA), said cargo planes are vulnerable because there are no passengers in them that could take action against a would-be hijacker. In addition, **the bill requires the Transportation Security Administration to develop a plan to make sure that air cargo – whether carried on all-cargo planes or in the belly of passenger planes – is "screened, inspected or otherwise made secure."**
Source: http://www.gomemphis.com/mca/business/article/0,1426,MCA_440_1810557,00.html
8. *March 14, Agence France-Presse* — **Iris-scan identity checks at Frankfurt airport.** One of continental Europe's busiest transport hubs, **Frankfurt airport, will start identity checks based on scanning the iris of passengers' eyes, an official said on Tuesday. The iris-scan checks will be run on a voluntary basis for about six months and could replace normal passport controls if they are successful,** a customs official said. Federal officials also said on Monday that security measures at Frankfurt airport would be stepped up in the event of a U.S.-led war on Iraq due to fears of attacks.

Source: <http://straitstimes.asia1.com.sg/world/story/0.4386.176749.0.0.html>

9. *March 13, Associated Press* — **Glitch blamed for Japanese air shutdown. The Japanese government said Thursday a glitch in a computer program made by the program developer, overlooked by both aviation bureau and company technicians for months, led to the failure of Japan's central air traffic control system two weeks ago. The failure, which occurred in both the main computer and its backup at 7 a.m. on March 1, delayed hundreds of thousands of passengers and prompted the cancellation of more than 200 flights over a two-day period.** Subsequent investigations identified the cause as a defect on a program installed on the central system that collects flight data from airports nationwide and feeds it to air traffic controllers, according to a statement by the transport ministry. **Aviation bureau technicians realized the program running on the flight data processing system was flawed when it was installed in September, but dismissed the error as too small to cause serious problems, the statement said. When technicians made changes to a related program on the morning of March 1, it paralyzed the entire system, disabling automatic data transmission of all departures to and from air traffic controllers. In total, over 200 flights were canceled, while about 1,300 were delayed.**

Source: http://biz.yahoo.com/ap/030313/japan_airport_trouble_1.html

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Postal and Shipping Sector

Nothing to report.

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Agriculture Sector

10. *March 14, Expatica.com* — **Bird flu epidemic continues. The bird flu outbreak on Dutch chicken farms showed no signs of abating at the weekend as the Agricultural Ministry confirmed 38 farms in Gelderland are infected. It is strongly suspected the virus is active on a further 32 farms, the Ministry said Friday.** Farm Minister Cees Veerman approved a temporary regulation on Thursday to keep all live poultry in the Netherlands indoors to try and stem the spread of the avian flu, which is usually fatal for chickens and other birds. Experts say humans are not at risk but Veerman has already ordered workers involved in culling sick birds be given a human flu vaccine. **The Minister is concerned the avian flu and the human flu may combine and give rise to a danger new form of the virus.**

Source: <http://www.expatica.com/index.asp?pad=2.18.>>

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Food Sector

11. *March 14, Food Ingredients First* — **Refrigerated food may have poisonous bacteria. Generally considered safe for human consumption, a variety of dairy and poultry products as well as a few vegetables are susceptible to carry the bacteria, Listeria, despite**

refrigeration or cooling treatment, new evidence says. The bacteria, identified by scientists as the causative agent of many a food-borne outbreaks from refrigerated food in the last few years, is yet to be fully understood pathogenically. "Listeria has been shown to survive low temperature and long time pasteurisation. The increase in listeriosis outbreaks in recent years has mainly been due to consumption of contaminated food products," Seema Garcha and Param Pal Sahota of Punjab Agricultural University's microbiology department said.

Source: http://www.foodingredientsfirst.com/newsmaker_article.asp?id=NewsMaker=3065/font>

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Water Sector

Nothing to report.

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Public Health Sector

12. *March 16, CNN* — **No answers yet on mystery pneumonia. A particularly virulent form of pneumonia had scientists and doctors scrambling Sunday for more information to share with a fearful public that already has been told to consider postponing visits to several locations where the disease has been reported.** Looking to stem any groundswell of panic, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Director Dr. Julie Gerberding noted that "a lot of illnesses" spread at this time of the year. "We don't even know [if] it's a virus," she told CNN. "It is flu season. We may be confusing this particular illness with garden-variety flu in some cases." "This particular illness" is the **newly named Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome, or SARS, an atypical pneumonia that was first recognized last November in China's Guangdong province.** An outbreak of the illness there killed five of the 350 people infected before ending in mid-February, World Health Organization spokesman Dick Thompson said. **Over the past week, more than 150 new or suspected cases of the pneumonia have been reported around the world, the WHO said. Nine of those people have died.** Other cases have been identified in Canada, Hong Kong, Indonesia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam — including one case of a Singapore doctor who began exhibiting symptoms as he flew from a medical conference in New York back to his home in Singapore. Gerberding said the CDC was taking no risks with the disease, handing out cards explaining the symptoms and what to do to people returning from cruises or trips to the areas where the disease has been identified. The CDC issued an alert about the disease on Saturday. The text of the alert is available at <http://www.cdc.gov/od/oc/media/pressrel/r030315.htm>
Source: <http://www.cnn.com/2003/HEALTH/03/16/mystery.disease/index.html>

13. *March 14, New Scientist* — **Cross-breeding fear over Dutch bird flu. The bird flu virus in the Netherlands has caused eye infections in as many as 30 farm workers.** The infections themselves are mild. **Virologists are concerned that, with the Dutch human flu season just starting, the bird virus could encounter human influenza virus and cross-breed to form a nasty new human pathogen.** People with flu symptoms have been banned from working with sick chickens. "We absolutely do not want to see human flu evolve from the avian virus," says

Albert Osterhaus, of Erasmus University, Rotterdam. **"If a human virus emerged with surface proteins from the avian virus, there would be no antibodies to it in the population."** **"The chances of this are low,"** he said. **"But in theory this could create a pandemic flu virus."** Flu pandemics have killed millions of people in the last century.
Source: <http://www.newscientist.com/news/news.jsp?id=ns99993505>

14. *March 14, The Washington Times* — **Problems persist in Iranian city hit by mustard gas in '87. Hundreds of residents of Sardasht — a city of 12,000 in northwestern Iran — still battle breathing problems as a result of exposure to Iraqi sulfur mustard warheads more than 15 years ago, according to a new report by Iranian researchers published in a U.S. medical journal.** The researchers examined the immediate as well as the long-term effects of an Iraqi chemical attack on a small town in Iran in July 1987, when the two nations were at war. The report, which appeared this week in the Journal of Burns, an online publication, comes as the United States prepares to go to war with Iraq to remove Saddam Hussein and all chemical and biological weapons in his country's possession, as well as any nuclear weapons it may be developing. Dr. Stephen Milner, editor of the journal, said in a telephone interview that there were several reasons for publishing the peer-reviewed study, which can be found online at www.journalofburns.com. **In addition, "This was the first time since World War I that there had been a long-term study of the effects of mustard gas. So this study is very significant,"** said Dr. Milner, who also is an associate professor of medicine at the Southern Illinois University School of Medicine. The Iran study, conducted by four researchers at the Baqiyatallah Medical Science University in Tehran, is entitled: "Public Health Status of the Civil Population of Sardasht 15 Years Following Large-Scale Wartime Exposure to Sulfur Mustard." **The researchers say sulfur mustard (SM) is a "chemical weapon which has been employed with devastating results against both military and civilian targets, most recently by Iraqi forces in campaigns against their own civilian population."** They describe SM as a compound that can harm cells even at low exposure levels. They say SM was used by Iraq in its aerial attack on Sardasht. "Four 250 kg bombs [each 551 pounds] with sulfur mustard warheads [released by MiG fighter-bombers] impacted in the city center causing numerous deaths and long-term chronic illnesses among survivors," they said.
Source: <http://www.washtimes.com/national/20030314-89227400.htm>

15. *March 13, Reuters* — **U.S. House approves medical errors bill.** The U.S. House of Representatives Wednesday overwhelmingly approved legislation aimed at reducing medical errors, which by some estimates are the nation's eighth-leading cause of death. **The bill calls for the creation of "patient safety organizations" that would collect and analyze anonymous reports of medical mistakes, then report back on ways to prevent similar mishaps in the future.** Participation by healthcare providers would be voluntary, and all information would be kept strictly confidential, with fines for disclosure up to \$10,000. **In its 1999 report estimating that medical mistakes kill between 44,000 and 98,000 Americans each year, the federally chartered Institute of Medicine called for both a voluntary reporting system for minor mistakes and "near misses," and a mandatory reporting system for more serious errors.**
Source: <http://reuters.com/newsArticle.jhtml?type=healthNews=2375781>

Government Sector

16. *March 14, Associated Press* — **\$3 million trove of fake ID papers seized.** U.S. Customs agents seized \$3 million worth of bogus identification documents and arrested two foreign nationals in what officials described Thursday as a major coup for the new federal Homeland Security department. **The seizure in Queens on March 11 netted a trove of "tens of thousands" of blank Social Security cards, drivers' licenses from 10 states, alien registration cards, New York City school diplomas, marriage and job certificates for foreign nationals, and an array of printing equipment and supplies for making false ID documents, Customs officials said.** Such fake documents could be used by terrorists or others to gain access to buildings and other security-sensitive locations, or to acquire legitimate identification, said Customs agent Dominick Lopez. Printing plates, laser color copiers, typewriters, inks, laminating materials and seals and stamps were among the production materials seized. Michael Garcia, acting assistant secretary for the Bureau of Immigration and Customs, called it "a significant blow to the counterfeit document underground," which he said poses a "serious risk to national security." **Officials identified the two suspects as Mario Nejida-Cruz, 33, and Esteban Chavez, 30, both of Queens. Lopez said the pair are Mexican nationals but their immigration status was not immediately known.**
Source: <http://www.newsday.com/news/local/wire/ny-bc-ny--customs-iddocumen0313mar13.story>
17. *March 14, New York Times* — **Security chief says nation must expect suicide attacks.** Homeland Security Secretary Tom Ridge joined federal law enforcement officials on Thursday in warning that suicide bombings like those that have killed hundreds in Israel are inevitable in the United States and will be difficult to prevent. His warning, in a television interview, came as Ridge and his department stepped up preparations to raise the nation's terrorism alert level to "high risk" out of concern over the possibility of terrorist attacks linked to an invasion of Iraq. **In his interview with Fox News, Ridge said, "we have to prepare for the inevitability" of suicide bombings in the United States. "The number one thing we seek to do is to prevent any kind of terrorist attack," he said, "but that lone wolf, that isolated suicide bomber might be the most difficult to protect against." He added, "We'll never be immune from those kinds of attacks."** Ridge's comments were his bluntest warning to date about the possibility that suicide bombers might strike. Similar remarks have been made in recent months by intelligence and law enforcement officials, including the FBI director.
Source: <http://www.nytimes.com/2003/03/14/national/14RIDG.html>
18. *March 13, The White House* — **Personnel announcement – Department of Homeland Security.** President George W. Bush on Thursday announced his intention to appoint three individuals to serve in his administration: The President intends to appoint **Robert P. Liscouski of Virginia, to be Assistant Secretary for Infrastructure Protection, Department of Homeland Security.** Liscouski currently serves as the Director of Information Assurances at the Coca-Cola Company. He also currently serves as a member of the Intelligence Science Board. The President intends to appoint **Paul J. Redmond of Massachusetts, to be Assistant Secretary for Information Analysis, Department of Homeland Security.** Redmond currently serves as a consultant to the Director of the Central Intelligence Agency.
Source: <http://www.nytimes.com/2003/03/14/politics/14TERR.html>

19. *March 13, U.S. Department of State* — **Public announcement – East Africa.** On Thursday, the State Department issued a Public Announcement to remind Americans of the continuing potential for terrorist actions, including kidnapping, against U.S. citizens in East Africa. **Supporters of al Qaeda and other extremists are still active in East Africa. The Department of State continues to receive threat information pertaining to this region and believes it is prudent to alert American citizens that such information is being received, so American citizens can make an informed decision whether to travel to or remain in East Africa.** The Department of State reminds Americans to remain vigilant with regard to their personal security and to exercise caution. U.S. citizens and interests abroad remain at risk of terrorist attacks by groups including but not limited to those with links to al Qaeda. Terrorists do not distinguish between official and civilian targets. **Increased security at official U.S. facilities has led terrorists to seek softer targets such as residential areas, clubs, restaurants, places of worship, hotels, schools, outdoor recreation events, resorts, beaches, and planes. Americans in remote areas or border regions where military or police authority is limited or non-existent could also be targets of attacks or kidnappings.**
Source: http://travel.state.gov/eafrica_announce.html

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Emergency Services Sector

20. *March 16, Washington Post* — **At home, a 2-front war on terrorism.** At 200 feet, the U.S. Park Police helicopter skims over the Tidal Basin, low enough to study the tourists standing on the steps of the Jefferson Memorial and the vehicles on nearby streets. When the crew members look down nowadays, they view the nation's most cherished monuments in a disturbing light — as possible terrorist targets. "We're looking for the unusual," said Sgt. Kenneth Burchell, the pilot. "What looks wrong?" **Increased patrols are only part of the picture. In the past 18 months, the region's top officials have spent countless hours and hundreds of millions of dollars on a massive undertaking that has few guidelines and no real completion point. Their goal is not only to prevent another terrorist assault on the nation's capital, but also to plan for any possible aftereffects.** With the threat that terrorists could retaliate during a U.S. war against Iraq, some believe this planning soon could be put to the test. Officials agree that Washington is much safer and better prepared for such a strike than it was Sept. 11, 2001. Throughout the region, police departments, hospitals and government agencies have been working to strengthen security measures, improve communication lines and stockpile medicines and protective gear. But they have also been forced to come to terms with an enemy who defies planning or prediction. **Much of the focus has been on preparing for attacks involving weapons of mass destruction: the explosion of a so-called dirty bomb, the release of a deadly chemical or the spreading of a biological agent such as smallpox. Even though such incidents may not be the most likely, they have received the most attention because they carry the gravest consequences. The region's leaders also have worked to harden the most obvious targets — bolstering defenses at the U.S. Capitol, the national monuments and the Metrorail system, among other places — while conceding that they cannot possibly protect everything.**
Source: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A31253-2003Mar 15.html>

21. *March 14, Boston Globe* — **Canines sniffing out trouble at popular Hub landmarks.** To Bila, the yellow Labrador who on Friday becomes the first bomb-sniffing dog to patrol the USS Constitution, homeland security is just a game. Smell one of 16 commonly used explosives, and out comes the reward: her favorite white play towel. **But to those responsible for protecting Old Ironsides, Faneuil Hall, Bunker Hill, and other historic landmarks in Boston, Bila's highly sensitive nose is a vital tool in the fight against terrorism. And should the United States attack Iraq in upcoming days, and possibly draw retaliatory strikes, dogs such as Bila who are trained to sniff suspicious packages, the mail, abandoned cars, and airplane luggage will be more important than ever, public safety officials say.** "In 2001 ... we had 32 calls prior to Sept. 11 for bomb-sniffing dogs. After Sept. 11, we had 114 for the remainder of the year," said William Fleming, deputy chief of the MBTA police and a former canine handler. The need "will definitely rise in the next couple of weeks, especially if we go into Iraq." **Among other National Parks, only the Statue of Liberty, Washington's landmarks, and the Presidio in San Francisco have bomb-sniffing dogs at their disposal.**
Source: http://www.boston.com/dailyglobe2/073/metro/Canines_sniffing_out_trouble_at_popular_Hub_landmarks+.shtml
22. *March 14, Los Angeles Times* — **Seven men arrested in home invasions; posed as police investigating al Qaeda terrorists.** Seven men who posed as police investigating Al Qaeda terrorists were arrested in a string of violent home invasions that targeted Armenian Americans in the San Fernando Valley, authorities said Thursday. **The capture of the men, all undocumented immigrants from El Salvador and Guatemala, was announced by Los Angeles Police Chief William J. Bratton. Detectives believe the men are responsible for at least three home-invasion robberies in the Van Nuys and North Hollywood areas since Jan. 2.** The men were allegedly en route to another robbery Monday when officers with the Special Investigation Section, which had them under surveillance, rammed their sport utility vehicle and arrested them, said Capt. James Tatreau, head of the Robbery-Homicide Division. **The men, dressed as plainclothes detectives in coats and ties, were equipped with handcuffs, hand-held radios, fake police badges and loaded handguns, police said.** Authorities said they would enter the homes between 8 and 9 p.m. under the pretense of serving a search warrant. "They tell the victims they'd linked them to the terrorist group al Qaeda," Lt. Jim Grayson said. "They appeared to target well-to-do residents in the Van Nuys area," Grayson said. According to police, the men took \$302,000 in cash and jewels. Nothing has been recovered.
Source: <http://www.latimes.com/news/local/la-me-home14mar14.1.2800719.story?coll=la%2Dheadlines%2Dcalifornia>

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Information and Telecommunications Sector

23. *March 14, SiliconIndia.com* — **Cyber crime a threat to Indian infrastructure.** The director of the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) in India said that cyber crime and organized corruption have assumed serious proportions. "Cyber crimes like hacking, e-mail fraud and other information security breaches linked to computers are turning out to be very serious problems," P.C. Sharma told journalists during a visit to Assam, India. **Fears have been expressed that a new breed of criminals could damage telecommunications or rail links,**

disrupt power supplies and harm other important parts of India's infrastructure using cyber tools. The CBI has launched a massive drive to tackle the threat, honing the skills of its elite officers and modernizing the agency's computer network. **Experts from the U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) visited India last year and trained policemen in dealing with cyber offences.**

Source: http://www.siliconindia.com/tech/tech_pgtwo.asp?newsno=18857_gy

24. *March 14, Associated Press* — **Pakistani pleads guilty to hacking U.S. Web sites.** A hacker who breached the computer network at Sandia National Laboratories and posted an anti-Israeli message on the Eglin Air Force Base Web site pleaded guilty to computer and credit card fraud charges, the U.S. attorney's office said Thursday. There were no known political or terrorist overtones to the breaches of four computer networks by 18-year-old Adil Yahya Zakaria Shakour of Los Angeles, said Patty Pontello, a spokeswoman for federal prosecutors. **Shakour penetrated the Florida air base's computer server repeatedly in April and May 2002, altering the Web page to denounce the Israeli advancement into Palestine and crediting the defacement to the "Anti India Crew."** Shakour is a Pakistani who could face deportation after he completes a prison term of up to 15 years, to be set at his June 12 sentencing. He agreed to make restitution of approximately \$100,000 for damage to the computer networks. More than \$2,700 in damage was done to the Sandia Labs unclassified Web site in Livermore.

Source: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A23590-2003Mar14.html?referrer=email>

25. *March 13, Federal Computer Week* — **Homeland CIO outlines priorities.** Steve Cooper, the CIO of the new Department of Homeland Security (DHS), told an industry gathering that **it is essential to move quickly to build DHS' infrastructure because "state-sponsored terrorists and al Qaeda are not going to wait until we have our act together."** He said **he and his information technology team will complete an inventory of IT assets brought together by the merger of 22 federal agencies.** It will be evaluated for "reuse, renewal, retirement or enhancement," and he expects to decide what systems to keep and what to retire by August. In the next six weeks, **DHS will issue a series of requests for information about wireless and geospatial technology to help officials decide how to create the best systems.**

Source: <http://www.fcw.com/fcw/articles/2003/0310/web-cooper-03-13-03.asp>

26. *March 13, Wired* — **Pakistan creates cyber crime wing.** A Pakistani security agency has launched a special wing to combat cyber crimes in part because the country had to rely on U.S. investigators to trace e-mails sent by the kidnappers of American journalist Daniel Pearl a year ago. **"The purpose of establishing the National Response Center for Cyber Crimes is to stop misuse of the Internet and trace those involved in cyber-related crimes,"** Iftikhar Ahmad, spokesman for Pakistan's Interior Ministry, told the Associated Press on Wednesday. "The importance of this special wing was felt when Daniel Pearl was kidnapped, and his captors started sending e-mails to newspapers," he said. The Wall Street Journal correspondent disappeared on January 23, 2002, from Pakistan's southern city of Karachi. **"The National Response Center for Cyber Crimes will play a key role in the days to come in tracing those terrorists who often use the Internet or prepaid telephone cards to communicate messages to their associates for carrying out acts of terrorism and other purposes,"** Ahmad said. The special wing has been established at the headquarters of an

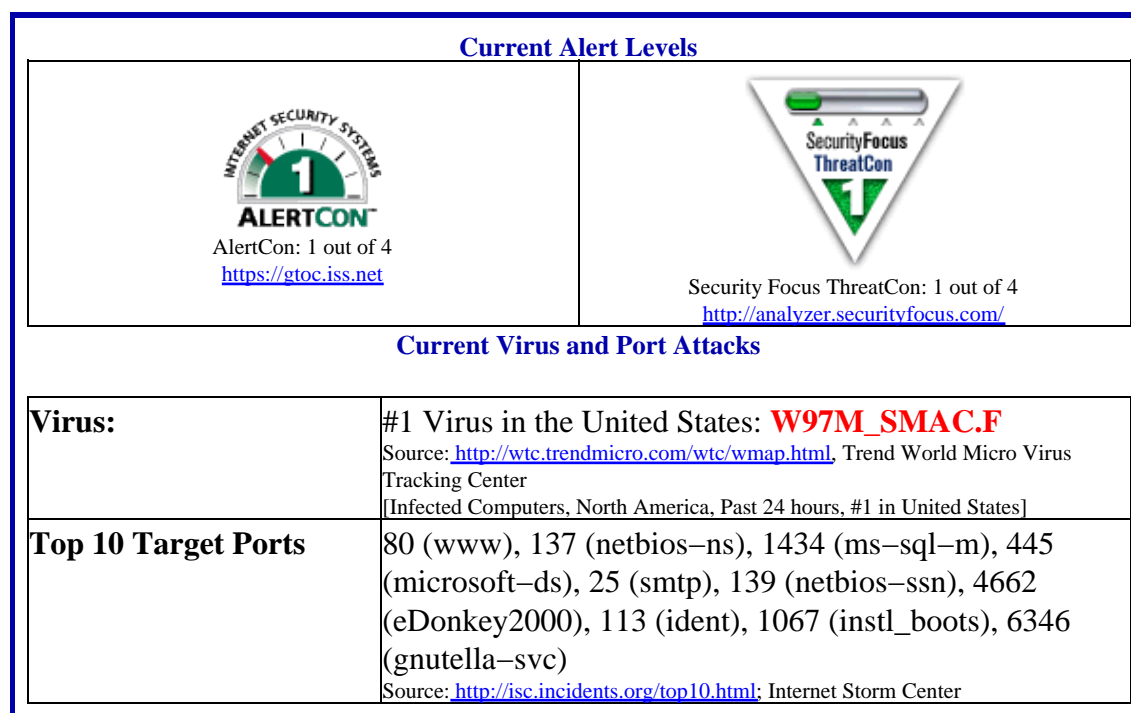
intelligence agency in Islamabad, Pakistan's capital.

Source: <http://www.wired.com/news/conflict/0,2100,58033,00.html>

27. *March 10, Government Computer News* — **NIST and NSA draft safe-IT profiles.** The National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) has partnered with the National Security Agency (NSA) to draw up Protection Profiles—basic security recommendations for 10 hardware and software areas. NSA also is developing implementation guides for configuring operating systems securely. A 2,000–page guide for Microsoft Windows 2000 is finished, and a guide for Windows XP is in beta evaluation, said William Billings, chief of operational network evaluation for NSA's Systems and Network Attack Center. In addition, the Defense Information Systems Agency's (DISA) soon-to-be-released Gold Disk tool will apply security configurations to operating systems. The Gold Disk is part of DISA's Security Technical Implementation Guidelines (STIGs), which parallel the NSA guides. **Profile development, which began about two years ago, already is complete for OSes, firewalls, intrusion detection systems, tokens and public-key infrastructures. Profiles should be ready by mid-2003 for wireless systems, browsers, databases, virtual private networks and biometric products.**

Source: http://gcn.com/22_5/tech-report/21312-1.html

Internet Alert Dashboard



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General Sector

28. *March 16, New York Times* — **Anger on Iraq seen as new al Qaeda recruiting tool.** On three continents, al Qaeda and other terror organizations have intensified their efforts to recruit young

Muslim men, tapping into rising anger about the American campaign for war in Iraq, according to intelligence and law enforcement officials. **In recent weeks, officials in the United States, Europe and Africa say they had seen evidence that militants within Muslim communities are seeking to identify and groom a new generation of terrorist operatives. An invasion of Iraq, the officials worry, is almost certain to produce a groundswell of recruitment for groups committed to attacks in the United States, Europe and Israel.** "An American invasion of Iraq is already being used as a recruitment tool by al Qaeda and other groups," a senior American counterintelligence official said. "And it is a very effective tool." Another American official, based in Europe, said Iraq had become "a battle cry, in a way," for al Qaeda recruiters. **The surge in al Qaeda recruitment efforts has been most visible in Germany, Britain, Spain, Italy and the Netherlands, the officials said. Investigators have significantly increased their use of informants and, in some cases, listening devices, to monitor mosques and other gathering places, where they have observed a sharp spike in anti-American oratory.**

Source: <http://www.nytimes.com/2003/03/16/international/middleeast/16RECR.html>

29. *March 16, Associated Press* — **Terror suspect questioned in Pakistan.** Pakistani and American officials on Sunday interrogated a key al-Qaeda suspect and another man detained with him, but would not say where they were being held or whether they would be handed over to U.S. custody, the information minister said. **Yassir al-Jaziri, who allegedly oversaw communication among al-Qaeda operatives, was arrested Saturday in the eastern city of Lahore. Another man, an Afghan named Gul Zeb, was also arrested, but was not considered an important figure in the terror network. The men were taken out of Lahore but Information Minister Sheikh Rashid Ahmed said they remained in Pakistan, though they could be turned over to U.S. authorities if requested.** U.S. and Pakistani forces have intensified their search for al-Qaeda figures – including Osama bin Laden – since the third-highest leader, Khalid Shaikh Mohammed, was arrested on March 1.

Source: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A32652-2003Mar 16.html>

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